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ABSTRACT

An overview is given of the current status of the field of curriculum studies. The author makes her observations based on her reading of 154 proposals submitted to the American Educational Research Association's Division B (Curriculum Studies) for its 1981 annual meeting. Acknowledging that these proposals primarily reflect research interests in the curriculum field, she reviews background characteristics of the authors and major curricular concerns that they expressed. Background data reveal a university-based group of professionals, about 40% women, representing most regions of America with concentrations in California and the more industrial midwestern and eastern states. Categorization of the proposals according to eight general content areas shows primary interest in understanding school practice and in the socio-policial context in which it unfolds. There is a desire to work with other subdisciplines of education that can illuminate such questions. Curricululist are not as preoccupied with theory and introspection as some recent debates have suggested, and their interests are far more on K-12 in their own settings than in higher education or in comparing cultures. The author concludes her analysis with a review of the proposals' stated purposes of curriculum inquiry. (Author/AV)

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A Self-Portrait of the Curriculum Field, 1980 (Confessions of a Program Chair)

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Kansas State University

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A Self-Portrait of the Curriculum Field, 1980 (Confessions of a Program Chair)

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Elizabeth Vallance
Kansas State University

MAR 23 1982

(Presented at the annual meeting of the American Educational Reserach Association, New York, March 1982: Session # 34.40)

This is a chance to walk out of the trees and look at the forest for a moment.

Despite recent allegations to the contrary, the field of curriculum studies is alive and well. Not only that, but it is more diverse in its concerns and less theoretically oriented than many of us sometimes think. Its devotees in academic circles are very much concerned with curriculum practice -- with curriculum change, development, implementation, evaluation, and research on all the above -- and they deal relatively little with the navel-gazing and wheels-within-wheels speculations that we often accuse ourselves of perpetuating. It also seems that curriculists by and large are not media freaks: very few of us feel a need for audio-visual equipment to bolster our presentations to colleagues, and what we do request is of a very rudimentary nature (slide and overhead projectors). We seem, on the face of it, to be fairly traditional educators concerned with matters of practice.

These observations and others I will present later in this paper emerge from my reading of the 154 proposals submitted to the American Educational Research Association's Division B (now called Curriculum Studies) for its 1981 annual meeting program. This paper analyzes those proposals from several points of view, expecting that these 154 self-proclaimed statements of concern about matters pertaining to the curriculum represent a goodly sample of the concerns of our profession as a whole. And as we shall see, the resulting self-portrait raises a number of tantalizing questions while at the same time laying some old suspicions at least temporarily to rest.

The setting

On schedule in August 1980, 114 proposals for individual papers and 40 proposals for symposia -- from 31 states and seven foreign countries -- arrived in my mail to be judged for inclusion in the 1981 program of AERA's Division B (then called Curriculum & Objectives), which I was chairing that year. The program chair's task, in the two months allowed before the central office's copy deadline, is to sort the proposals roughly by topic, assign them to appropriate readers, pick the winners, group them into relevant and logical sessions with knowledgable and articulate chairs and critics, and hope that the winning presentations will be as good as their proposals promised.

Each of the 154 proposals was read by at least three of the 60 readers. Ultimately 56% of the paper proposals and 53% of the symposia were accepted, for an overall acceptance rate of 55% that was consistent with preceding years. The program included 26 symposia, 44 papers grouped into seven critique and paper sessions, and 26 papers grouped into six roundtable group sessions. (See appendix A) Final judgments as to which proposals to accept were made by the program chair based on readers' comments and on the best arrangement of papers into coherent topical groups. The program itself unfolded in Los Angeles in April of 1981, and as an aside I must say that the last frustration of being program chair is the absolute impossibility of attending each session. One never knows quite what one has wrought.

These judgments were rendered over a year and a half ago now, but my files are filled with the data: 154 statements of what the salient issues and questions in curriculum are, 154 statements of problems deemed by their authors to be essentially curricular in nature. Though they vary in quality, collectively they provide an incredibly rich body of evidence as to how the field of curriculum study defines itself. The authors and organizers are self-proclaimed curriculists (though some may at the same time claim other allegiances as well), few of whom were aware of what any others were proposing, all of them deciding on their own to address a problem concerning the curriculum of schools.

These curriculists had selected Division B over eight other AERA divisions: administration, measurement and research methodology, counseling and human development, history and historiography, learning and instruction, social context of schooling, school evaluation and program development, and education in the professions. Some 13,000 or more professional educators are members of AERA, and though Division B constituted at the time the third largest division (with about 3,800 members, about 28% of the total), we managed to submit an average of only 7% of the total proposals over the preceding five years (Do we have stage fright? Do we lack travel funds? The discrepancy is a mystery). Thus, while the possible pool was large, the actual evidence of the proposals is self-selected. The 154 statements of curriculum questions reflect, we must assume, a distillation of the major concerns facing the field at the time.

More accurately, these 154 statements reflect the major concerns of that wing of the curriculum field represented by AERA. The caveat is important. We must remember in this analysis that the R in AERA stands for Research, and that the organization, large and diverse though it is, is itself self-selected and made up of professionals interested chiefly in research into educational problems. Any subgroup of such an organization is necessarily somewhat shewed toward research interests, and discussions among its members will be flavored by that bias. The sample, therefore, is imperfect; it cannot claim to represent all professional "curriculists" nationwide. Quite likely the curriculists most active in the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD) would be somewhat different, and I know from experience that meetings of in-the-trenches educational practitioners emphasize "how we did it" or "how to do it" prescriptions for surviving the day-to-day turmoils of the profession, largely eschewing research and analysis. So I do not claim that AERA's Division B is the best or most representative place to start, nor even that 1980 was an especially representative year in terms of concerns raised. But it is a starting point, and it should at least interest those of us who are here at the 1982 edition of the same meeting.

My principal concern here today is less with the quality of the proposals than with their aggregate characteristics. As such, this discussion will ignore the distinction between proposals that were accepted and those that were not, and will by the same token ignore readers' comments altogether. The two questions I seek to address in this paper are: Who are we? What are our major concerns? Because each of us works within a certain circle of colleagues and research questions, few of us has the opportunity to see the profession in its entirety, unless we somehow make a point of reading all articles in all journals (and even that shows us only the winning ideas rather than the aggregate of all our concerns). This paper provides a broader view and may enable us to answer colleagues in and outside education who say, with great puzzlement, "but what's 'curriculum' anyway? what do you guys do?"

Categories of evidence surveyed in answering these questions include the following: 1) Straight profile data available from the proposal cover sheets: geographical distribution, sex, institutional affiliation, use of co-authors, special needs. 2) Curricular concerns expressed in the proposals themselves: topics addressed, type of study and methodology proposed, stated purpose, and relative emphasis on theory and practice. These concerns taken as a whole should help us to see, for example, whether most of our inquiry in curriculum is done mainly for the sake of sheer understanding, or is geared toward improving school practice, or is done to inform an argument. They should help us to see whether we are biased toward any particular kind of research methodology and to determine whether we're as obsessed by the relationship between theory and practice as we sometimes seem. The profile presented here, then, is a compilation of factual data presented explicitly by the authors and one program chair's reading of the substance of 154 proposals submitted in August of 1980. It is only mildly statistical; it is primarily a review.

Who are we?

First let's look briefly at the descriptive data available on the authors and organizers of the proposed sessions. Given the nature of AERA and its emphasis on scholarship and research rather than on school practice, we might expect most of the

authors to reside in universities and colleges rather than schools or other practitioner-oriented settings. And we should expect the proportion of women authors to be noticeably less than half the total, as it seems to be in most highly skilled and higly educated professions. Both of these expectations prove correct; in fact there is little that is startling in these data. A summary appears below in Table 1:

Table 1: Characteristics of Division B Principal Authors/Organizers

	114 Papers		40 Symposia		154 Total	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Women	46	40	15	38	61	40
Men	68	60	25	62	93	60
AERA members	97	85	37	92	134	87
Proposals including co-authors or co-organizers	53	47	24	60	77	50
Affiliation						
University	87	76	35	88	122	79
College	7	6	2	5	9	6
Public schools	5	4	1	2	6	4
R&D or testing centers	7	6	1	2	8	5
Other or unclear	8	7	1	2	9	6
Nationality (by address)						
--U.S.	103	89	38	88	136	88
--Other	11	10	2	5	13	8
Proposals requesting audiovisual equipment	15	13	6	15	21	14

The figures refer only to the principal authors' characteristics and affiliation. I am aware of few available data with which to compare these, save a study by Scheuneman (1979) that suggests that the 40% overall figure for women authors is consistent with the percentage of female authroship of Division B papers in 1978. Scheuneman found that Division B's percentage of (accepted) papers authored solely by women had increased from an average of 17.5%, in the even-numbered years from 1970 to 1976 (never exceeding 20%), to 37.0% at the 1978 meeting. Evidently Division B has somewhat stabilized at about 40%; Scheuneman's data show that our rate

of participation by women in 1978 was the highest of the nine divisions, with the next highest being 29.9% and the lowest 19.4%

That fully 85% of the principal authors proposing papers for the 1981 meeting should be from universities and colleges is hardly surprising, though it is noteworthy that there was no close second at all. But it is noteworthy too in Division B's case, since more than some other divisions (History and Historiography, or Measurement and Research Methodology, for example), it explicitly addresses questions of school practice and could conceivably attract more professionals from that setting than it does. Less predictable is that half the proposals included one or more co-authors, even for individual papers which, unlike symposia, do not by definition encourage group presentations. More data would be needed to explain this phenomenon, since the low percentage of non-AERA members (13% overall) proposing sessions is not sufficient to account for proposals where a co-author or sponsor would be essential; information concerning length of time in the profession, whether the reported study was funded by a grant with a research team involved, number of previous presentations at AERA and other such data might help explain it. The only things that come quickly to mind are that: 1) many universities are more liberal in covering conference expenses for those who are presenting, and perhaps our profession is simply very collegial in helping each other claim presentorship status, and 2) there may be a number of first-time presenters who are uncertain of their ability to have a proposal accepted on their own. The only unpredictable and slightly amusing revelation in these data is the stodginess of curriculists when it comes to modern technology: only 14% of us requested any kind of audio-visual equipment to assist in our presentations, and these were entirely on the rather primitive order of slide projectors, overhead projectors, and table microphones -- not a video cassette player in the bunch and no computer gimmicks. We seem to trust the written and spoken word in our communications with colleagues. (It would be interesting to know how this compares with other educational professions, but at present I can't offer a clue).

Out of curiosity I looked at the geographical distribution of the principal authors, with the results below (Table 2). The data are not surprising, except in one respect. While we might expect most the the prime movers (principal authors) to come from the most populous states (note the top eight or so), I wouldn't expect the prairie states from North Dakota to Oklahoma to have propelled no one into this arena. Yet that seems to have happened (I unofficially discount the "2" from Kansas, since I know that the two proposals were from the same person and that he had only recently moved to Kansas from -- guess where -- California). Other missing blocks are most of New England (the conference was in Los Angeles, after all) and parts of the Deep South. Perhaps those regions have strong state or regional professional associations that meet their needs, or perhaps these figures are a fluke of this particular year. I don't know. Not shown in either table is the fact that fully 103 individuals were listed as co-authors or co-organizers/chairs, with almost exactly the same distribution by state. Number of co-authors listed varied from one to seven, though usually one or two.

Table 2: Geographical distribution of Division B principal authors/organizers

State or country	Frequency	States not represented
California	22	North Dakota
Illinois	14	South Dakota
Ohio	12	Nebraska
Pennsylvania	12	Iowa
New York	10	Oklahoma
Michigan	7	Wyoming
Texas	6	
New Jersey	7	Louisiana
Tennessee	4	Missippi
Virginia	4	North Carolina
Kentucky, Minnesota, Missouri Oregon, Washington, Wisconsin	3 each	Vermont New Hampshire Connecticut
Arizona, Florida, Georgia, Indiana, Kansas Massachusetts, Utah, Washington DC, West Virginia	2 each	Deleware Rhode Island Maryland
Alabama, Arkansas, Colorado, Hawaii, Idaho, Maine, South Carolina	1 each	Alaska New Mexico
Canada	4	Nevada
Netherlands	3	
England	2	
Australia, Israel, Scotland, South Africa	1 each	
	154	

What are our major concerns?

The nature of the proposals is shaped somewhat -- but I suspect minimally -- by the Call for Proposals, published in the May issue of Educational Researcher nearly a year before the spring meeting. Each program chair writes his or her own Call; the Calls change from year to year, though not enormously. The Call serves as a kind of map identifying and outlining the territory deemed acceptable by each Division and is the program chair's definition of the field for the year -- a heady responsibility which seems to prompt most of us to define the field fairly broadly. Some other study would have to determine the influence of the categories and encouragements in the Call on the substance of the proposals responding to it; my hunch -- and that of other program chairs I've talked with -- is that the Call serves to define a problem as either in or out of "curriculum" as a field, and that the specific categories outlined in it are mainly items of clarification. The broad boundaries of the field seem not to change greatly from year to year; the specific distinctions held by each chair do.

The Call on which the 1981 proposals were based is presented here:

> Division B is concerned with the nature and improvement of curriculum practice, research, and theory, and it invites proposals on those topics. Curriculum concerns touch on many aspects of educational endeavor and can serve as a focus for them. Accordingly, proposals are encouraged that deal with the educational, social, political and ethical issues in curriculum plans, development, implementation, argumentation, research and theory-building. Proposals may include the following but are not limited to them:
>
> (1) Curriculum inquiry and research -- conceptual bases, assumptions, implications, issues and consequences of various research approaches, both traditional and qualitative; assessments of past and present curriculum research; interpretation of curriculum research in terms of its application to practice; sources of research questions and hypotheses in conventional and naturalistic research in curriculum.
>
> (2) Analysis and evaluation of practice -- assessments of curriculum projects in light of their political, ethical, and social impacts; contributions of curriculum practice to the improvement of theory; relation of teacher education to curriculum planning, implementation, and change; alternative approaches to curriculum design, and critiques of various alternative models; history of curriculum change and stability; implications of federal, state and local policy and funding for curriculum practice.

(3) The social bases of curriculum -- the role of social, cultural, and administrative patterns in shaping curricula and their teachings; the practical sociocultural and political sources of curriculum content, method, and argumentation; curriculum as a shaper of and reflection of social values; political implications of curriculum development and implementation.

(4) Curriculum as a "discipline" -- issues involved in defining curriculum as a discipline or field of study; historical, philosophical, and sociophychological perspectives on curriculum theory and practice; the interrelationship of theory and practice in curriculum discourse; critical analyses of curriculum theory and debate; assessments of major curriculum issues in the past, present, or future.

(5) Curriculum in the larger educational context -- the implications for curriculum of teacher education research, learning theory, school organization and administration, educational technology, educational policy analysis, national and local demographic changes, value conflicts, changing school finance pattersn, or other significant trends influencing what is taught in schools.

(6) Historical perspectives on the curriculum -- analyses and critiques of various educational movements and philosophies as they affect the curricula of schools and other educational settings; case studies of curriculum change or consolidation as social history; interpretations of historical data and patterns in terms of their impact on the content, method, and argumentation of curriculum; the curriculum as historical document.

(7) Curriculum at the post secondary level -- issues involved in the design of general and specialized curricula at the college level; applications of curriculum research and theory to schooling beyond grade 12; problems of articulation between K-12 and postsecondary education; issues involved in the concept of general education; goals and evaluation of postsecondary schooling.

(8) Comparative studies of curriculum -- comparative analyses of the bases, form, and politics of curriculum making in America and/or other countries; international issues in curriculum planning, implementation, and evaluation; contributions of an international perspective to curriculum theory and research.

Division B welcomes and encourages symposia which allow for dialogue about curriculum issues from various points of view. Any sessions intended for joint sponsorship by Division B and any other Division or a SIG should be identified as such in the proposal; jointly sponsored sessions are appropriate.

Let's look first at the published categories of interest and at where the 1981 proposals generally fell within them. Each proposal was coded (by me) for one or more categories when it was received, as a means of matching it appropriately with the reviewers, each of whom had indicated an interest in one or more of the same eight categories. I recently re-read all the abstracts to confirm or modify the Call categories, and found that the original codings held, though I frequently added as many

as two to a given proposal. The total number of proposals reflected in the data below numbers far more than 154: the scores indicate the relative degree of interest overall in these eight components of the curriculum field, which are not mutually exclusive. They are presented in descending order of importance:

Table 3: General Interest Categories, Division B proposals

Rank order		114 Papers	40 Symposia	Total	%
1	Analysis and evaluation of practice (including the doing of research)	67	11	78	50.6
2	Curriculum in the larger educational context	35	16	51	33.1
3	Social bases of curriculum	28	9	37	24.0
4	Curriculum inquiry and research (papers about these topics)	18	10	28	18.2
5	Curriculum at the postsecondary level	18	6	24	15.6
6	Curriculum as a "discipline"	11	10	21	13.6
7	Historical perspectives on the curriculum	11	3	14	9.1
8	Comparative studies of curriculum	5	1	6	3.9

By far the heaviest emphasis was on "analysis and evaluation of practice", a finding that startled me only because I share my part of the forest with those who worry about (and generate) the allegedly excessive focus on theory. While theory per se is not a choice in the above eight items, formulations of and analyses of curriculum theory were coded into the "curriculum inquiry and research" category, and it ranks only fourth in importance. The category which best captures the "navel-gazing" qualities of the field of curriculum studies -- "curriculum as a discipline" -- received far less attention that I had anticipated, claiming only 13.6% of our attention and ranking 6th out of eight in importance.

The preponderance of proposals analyzing and evaluating practice is perhaps remarkable only to those of us who have been involved in theoretical questions and in debates over the life and death of the field itself. Nonetheless, the

above clearly demonstrate that despite the high visibility of such abstract questions the professional journals, most of our colleagues are more concerned with the practical questions of survival in schools and with the improvement of educational practices. Fully half the proposals dealt at least in large part (if not solely) with questions of practice; the evidence seems clear that the profession has its feet on the ground. A separate analysis of exactly how these analyses of practices are carried out uncovered the interesting fact that curriculists use a wide variety of research methodologies with approximately equal emphasis. Experimental studies (in which controls and statistical treatments of data were employed) were used in only nine proposals, slightly outweighed by the use of case studies (eleven); historical studies, ethnography, observation, and interviews were used with nearly equal frequency (six or seven instances of each), and qualitative inquiry based on the arts appeared four times. Surveys or questionnaires were used in thirteen cases. Traditional experimental studies clearly do not dominate the curriculum field, which instead is characterized by a receptivity to a variety of research methods according to the problem at hand. Neither is qualitative inquiry an especially rising star, to judge by these proposals, though a comparison to even five years ago should show significant growth.

In terms of specific problems addressed in the analyses of practice, the following were the most prominent: studies of curriculum "happening" in various stages (development, implementation, evaluations, and especially curriculum change), which appeared in 38 proposals; questions relating to education in the subject matter areas (especially reading but also science, math, art and history); and student perceptions of schooling.

Equally interesting, however, is the fact that the second and third highest areas of interest were the two rather vague categories I had called "curriculum in the larger educational context" and "the social bases of curriculum". This would seem to suggest that while we are much concerned with school practice, we are also

highly contextual as a profession: both these second and third categories reflect an interest in the socio-cultural setting from which school practice derives its meaning and in the lessons that other disciplines within education can teach us. An obvious interpretation of these trends is that we realize that curriculum questions do not stand alone -- they depend very much on the social and political climates that surround them and they require the insights of other aspects of the profession in order to be fully understood. While the high rankings of these two contextual items may be due in part to their mushiness (next time I would write the Call differently, knowing what I now know), over a quarter of the 154 proposals touched on these contextual issues. Corroborating this apparent interest in the context of curriculum problems was the unexpectedly strong interest shown in teaching and teacher education -- this despite the fact that curriculum is usually juxtaposed to "instruction" and considered quite apart from it. Nonetheless, it turns out that fully twenty-one proposals touched specifically on questions of teaching and the preparation (pre-service or inservice) of teachers.

It is worth remarking too that we are pretty ethnocentric in our approach to curricular problems, only 3.9% of us having proposed to deal with curriculum problems of other countries -- comparative studies was our least favorite topic. Our second least favorite was the category of historical perspectives on the curriculum, attracting only 9% of the authors; we would have to know how many erstwhile curriculists proposed papers to Division H (History and Historiography) if we are to know whether the interest in historical changes in the curriculum is really as low as this suggests.

A word on theory and model-building before abandoning them to their unexpected supporting roles: I identified only nine proposals (papers or symposia) in which a major topic of discussion was the relationship between theory and practice -- a mere 6% of the total. Slightly more popular was the more substantive problem of actually proposing models to describe or to guide practice -- 13 proposals took this direction,

indicating that while our interest in the conceptual and abstract is clear, it takes the form of doing something about it more often than worrying about its usefulness. Given the self-consciousness of many curriculum theorists (myself included) who fear that we dwell too much on flights away from the practical real objects of our attention (see Schwab 1970), this subdued flirting with theory was refreshing. It was clearly overshadowed by our meticulous attention to data-based research in the analysis of practice.

All in all, the distribution of interests among the eight given categories suggests that we seem to be primarily interested in understanding school practice and in the socio-political context in which it unfolds; we are aware of and eager to work with the other sub-disciplines of educaton that might illuminate such questions for us. We are not nearly so hung up on theory and on introspective identity crises as some recent debates have suggested, and our interests are far more on K-12 in our own settings than in higher education or in comparing cultures. And why do we care?

One final and very revealing analysis of the proposals portrays the several purposes of curriculum inquiry. A careful reading of the paper and symposium proposal abstracts suggests that our stated purposes in doing curriculum inquiry are few but clearly delineated and quite consistent. It proved useful to distinguish between papers and symposia in doing this analysis, since the symposium format seems by its nature to foster general discussions of issues, examinations of salient questions from assorted perspectives, and other such reflective activities.

A paper proposal invites a single presenter to present the findings of a single study or an analysis of a single problem. The space allowed is small -- 8 to 10 minutes; the paper will be grouped with as many as five others in a session, with or without a critic. The paper must plan to stand on its own and cover its territory itself. As a result, the purposes of proposed papers tend to be quite specific and also appropriately limited -- few claim to both present new findings and analyze

all their implications for theory and for practice, and it happens that quite a number of them are comfortable presenting new knowledge for its own sake without direct implications for practice. The stated purposes of the paper proposals were as follow, in descending order of frequency; representative sample titles are included with each for illustrative purposes. Many papers had more than one explicit purpose, and in cases where improvements in practice were clearly implied by the authors (as in "the paper concludes with recommendations") I counted the proposal in that category as well as the one more explicitly stated. The categories are not mutually exclusive.

Table 4: Stated purposes of proposed Division B papers (N=114)

Rank order	Purpose	Frequency	%
1.5	To know; to identify causal or correlative relationships; to contribute to the knowledge base; to understand; to develop findings that in themselves suggest shifts in our thinking about curriculum. "Expectancy Effects Resulting from Implementing Ethical Guidelines" "Is Achievement Enjoyable?" "Subject Matter Constraints on the Ecology of Classroom Instruction" "The Effects of Books in Spanish and Free Reading Time on Hispanic Students' Reading Abilities and Attitudes" "Assessing the Instructional Effects of a Television-Related Reading Program"	31	27%
1.5	To identify practices that can be directly related to the improvement of education: curriculum change, curriculum implementation procedures, classroom setting, teacher education. "Social Class and School Practice: A Theoretical Model for Educator Intervention" "A Curriculum Model for Vocational Expansion in Art Education Programs in Colleges and Universities" "Teacher Participation in Educational Innovation: Some Insights Into its Nature" "Can Developmental Theory Enhance the Teaching and/or Learning of History in the College Classroom?"	31	27%
3	To present descriptive information, gathered from survey or case study or other descriptive methodology, as a profile of educational practice that may be interpreted by others; to inform, largely without recommendation.	18	16%

	"Levels and Types of Curriculum Design Skills Presently Offered in Pennsylvania Teacher Education Programs" "Factors Related to the Exclusion of Students from School Activities" "School-Based Curriculum Development and Team-Oriented In-service Training: the Dutch Case" "The 'Teacher-as-Researcher' Movement in Britain" "An Ethnography of Curriculum Decision-Making"		
4.5	To interpret or analyze existing knowledge, concepts or educational practice so as to allow educators to redefine major problems or see things differently. "Science and Humanities: The Great Curriculum Divide" "Curriculum History as Usable Knowledge" "The First Campaign for Sex Education" "The Chattanooga Bible Case: The Legal Determination of Content and Method"	16	14%
5.5	To present and argue the value of a model or theory about the curriculum and the issues pertaining to it. "A Theory about Theories: Making Sense of the Classroom Perspective through Symbolic Interaction and Curriculum Networks" "The Lure of the Practical: Implications of Curriculum Theory" "Curriculum Development and Instructional Planning Within an Epistemological-Psychological Framework: A Theoretical Synthesis" "Toward a Comprehensive Theory of Curriculum Change" "A Generic Model for the Institutionalization of Curriculum Change" "The Curriculum and the Businesslike School"	14	12%
5.5	To make a case for some needed change in research methodology, or educational practice; to argue; to persuade "The Practical, the Theoretic, and the Conduct of Curriculum Research" "The Most Important Problems in Education is to Come to Terms with Values" "Feeling and Thought in Educational Programs" "Sex Equity in the Social Studies: A Model for Curriculum Change"	14	12%
7	To improve or guide evaluation or research "Role of Classroom Learning Environment Data in Formative Evaluation of an Activity-Based Curriculum" "A Synthesis of Developmental Theories and Learning Domain Models: Implications for Curriculum and Research" "Application of the Dramatic Method of Curriculum Evaluation" "Problems in Curriculum Evaluation" "Evaluative Film" "Measuring Outcomes in Bilingual Programs: Is CTBS Enough?"	10	11%

The purposes of the proposed symposia, by contrast, were more reflective. None used the conference as an occasion to present new data, and few were directly concerned with prescribing improvement in practice (although, as with the paper proposals, many were implicitly geared toward that end). The symposium format, where three or more colleagues present related papers and carry on reasoned conversation about a single general topic, lends itself to analysis and synthesis, and to thoughtful exploration of ideas. The stated purposes of the symposia are outlined below, and again the categories are not mutually exclusive; representative symposium titles are provided for illustrative purposes.

Table 5: Stated purposes of proposed Division B symposia (N=40)

Rank order	Purpose	Frequency	%
1	To assess developments having possible implications for educational practice or for teacher education. "Employability Development and Experiential Learning: Implications for Change in the Academic Curriculum" "Discussion as a Curricular Resource" "A Future for Colleges of Education" "The Contributions and Limits of the Social and Behavioral Sciences to the Education of Educators" "Objectives for Teacher Education: The Development of Teachers as Teachers and as Persons"	12	30%
2	To illustrate and/or argue for alternative research methodologies. "Ethnography and the Study of Curriculum" "Using Case Studies to Illuminate Kindergarten Curriculum" "Educational Criticism: Four Aspects of An Alternative Evaluation Methodology" "A Second Generation Critique of Alternative Curriculum Research Orientation" "Toward Research in a New Key: Re-Minding Educational Studies"	10	25%
3	To raise questions or explore issues about a particular curricular concern; to discuss and to inform. "Creativity: Its Educational Implications" "Can Written Curriculum Guides Guide Teaching?" "Issues in Tutorial Program Development for Non-Traditional Students" "What in the World is Curriculum Theory?" "Ethics, Ideology, and Curriculum Decision-Making"	9	23%

4.5	To interpret or re-assess existing knowledge so as to allow new applications of it and new perspectives on educational problems "Philosophy of Educaton: Reactions to the 80th NSSE yearbook" "The Research on Teaching: A Curricular Appraisal" "The Child's View of Schooling: Theoretical, Methodological, Pedagogical Implications"	8	20%
4.5	To interpret or re-assess particular educational practices or experiences so as to allow a better understanding of them. "The Effects of Educational Models on Curriculum and Classroom Practice: Passing Fancies or Real Contributions?" "Teacher Burnout: Disease and Cure" "Sources of Curriculum Policy and Practice: Federal Perspectives"	8	20%
6	To present information so as to inform colleagues, without necessarily seeking to re-orient their thinking about educational problems; to contribute to the knowledge base. "Inside an Evaluation Project" "Instructional Improvement in Science Education at the Postsecondary Level" "Environment as a Curricular Variable" "The Natural Underlying Sturcture of the Disciplines"	6	15%

The implication of these various purposes of curriculum inquiry are suggested in the composite self-portrait in the concluding section, below.

Notes toward a self-portrait of the curriculum field

This relatively simple descriptive study provides the beginnings of a self-portrait of curriculists as a group. The distinctions offered in these pages are not highly sophisticated and have not been tested for reliability with other readers -- they are my interpretation of the substantial data mailed to me in 1980. More rigorously controlled studies suggest themselves from this one, for a number of questions are raised here than I am presently unable to answer. Nonetheless, the 154 statements about problems deemed to be important and curricular in nature offer a solid starting point: they responded to the same Call and thus to the same "definition" of what the curriculum field can include; they used a standard format; they provided some standard information; interpretation ultimately by a single program chair is a procedure built into the AERA program review process itself. Though the analysis

undertaken here is sketchy, it is defensible. The patterns emerging in this reading of the data are illuminationg and suggestive of just how broad the field of curriculum studies really is.

The need for a profile of the discipline and its followers is one I feel quite frequently. Unlike some areas of education -- teacher education, say, or counseling, or administration -- "curriculum" as a label is vague to start with. I am frequently asked what it means, what it means I do with my time, how it can be distinguished from other disciplines within education, and how a university-based curriculist can be useful to practical problems. It has, until now, been difficult to answer; I usually answer by describing my own interests -- the social context of education, philosophical studies in education, the hidden curriculum, historical studies and "theory" (a word that always stumps them). But without a thorough reading of the proposals as I have done here I could not have predicted where our major interests actually lie.

Let me conclude this report with two items: first a composite picture of who we are, what we care about, and why, and secondly some reflections on what this exercise has taught us and the kinds of questions it raises that these data cannot yet address.

We are: a university-based group of professionals, about 40% women, representing most regions of America: we are concentrated in California and the more industrialized midwestern and eastern states, with a sprinkling in most others except the North Dakota-to-Oklahoma stretch of prairies and the extreme northeast. Seven foreign countries account for just over 10% of our numbers. We use a wide variety of research tools to answer questions that pertain largely to our understanding of and improvement of educational practice. We find ourselves proposing a number of theories and models to explain our doings and to motivate our research, but we don't "flee upwards" into theory nearly as much as Schwab's (1970) concerns suggested -- or perhaps we learned from him and took the proper route. We are

especially concerned about such practical issues as the training of teachers, even carrying this to a concern with the training of teacher educators, and with the process of curriculum improvement -- its development and implementation and the change it brings about. We analyze and evaluate quite a bit, and we are very thoughtful. We like to probe, raise questions, explore issues, reassess existing knowledge -- and given a proper forum such as a symposium, we will do just that. This suggests that such navel-gazing as we do occurs not in the loneliness of our studies (for that would be bleak indeed) but in the company of colleagues: we like to TALK ABOUT curriculum, and given a group of friends we will more likely massage general questions than present data at each other. Half of us prefer to prepare conference presentations with a colleague. We seem more cordial than some of us might have expected.

We seem to have stopped asking, during a breathing spell of at least a year, whether our discipline is alive or dead, and are instead much more interested in the problems it can try to solve when it is alive. Our approaches are very diverse. We ask very small specific questions (such as whether books in Spanish and free time to read them affect Hispanic students' reading abilities, or what meanings ten children took from being taught to read in the first grade, or whether 19 groups of teachers had ever heard of the J-curve). We ask big general unanswerable questions as well (can curriculum guides guide teaching? what in the world is curriculum theory? is achievement enjoyable? do schools of education have a future? what are the educational implications of creativity?). We analyze specific data (documentary evidence from the Chattanooga Bible case, evaluation data from a 3-year evaluation of a Right-to-Read program, questionnaires on school image answered by 11,000 students in 22 states); we also analyze large concepts and bodies of knowledge (the notion of the "two cultures" of science and the humanities, cumulative research on teaching, the federal experience in guiding curriculum policy, the structure of the disciplines). We make broad arguments (for coming to terms

with values in curriculum development, for seeing curriculum inquiry as a human agenda, for considering the importance of feeling as a subject of evaluation, for certain new methodologies). We draw some very specific conclusions from our research (that teachers should be involved in curriculum planning, that environmental measures should be used as diagnostic tools in formative evaluation, that math educators should consider the social system of the classroom in teaching mathematics). We also present data straightforwardly, leaving others to distill their implications for practice (we report on the impact of a special articulation program on college retention, on the influence of foreign language study on English achievement, on a successful staff-development project in an urban high school). We offer recommendations from our own data (suggestions for revitalizing the needs assessment, encouragement to consider family health histories in teaching a health education unit, recommendations for redesigning teacher education in Pennsylvania), but we do very little sheer exhortation, and quite a lot of well-documented argument. We do almost no bemoaning of the present (or if we do, we realize that the topic is not a good candidate for an AERA presentation) but instead are constantly looking for ways of improving things; as a result, there is a decidedly optimistic tone to our collective concerns and -- collectively -- a belief that all kinds of approaches can help us get where we want to go. We offer researched documentation of proposed changes in practice, thoughtful reflections on what the main issues are, models to clarify and systematize our thinking, reminders from history, alternative perspectives on a single problem. We deal with kindergarten, subject-matter curricula at all grade levels, tutorial projects for special students, college curriculum, the curriculum of future curriculists, and the hidden curriculum. Our interests, in short, cover a wide array of topics and of attitudes toward them. There is no single overriding theme. We are a dedicated but motley crew.

Such, anyway, is as close to a generalized self-portrait as the available data allow, and it is a portrait of only one species of curriculists. Our cousins in ASCD and in other practitioner-oriented associations are surely different from us, living elsewhere in the forest as they do with special messengers connecting them to us. And it may be that in ten years' time the portrait will have to be replaced, with another.

I close with a few questions that emerge from these observations. One concerns the utility of painting such a portrait at all. I draw no conclusions from it save a greater measure of appreciation for the complexity of the discipline, and I present this picture solely to inform; there is no hidden agenda. But might there be? Might we want to do something in either direction -- either to focus Division B's concerns more clearly or to diversify it even further by encouraging school-based practitioners to participate? Secondly, what data are most useful in understanding our collective identity and what aspects of the proposals should be looked at more carefully? Looking at their central concerns, methodologies, and purposes is a useful beginning, but do we also want to know specifically the setting and duration of each study or the range of variables considered by them? Third, while this survey gives us a fairly coherent portrait of the curriculum field, it is impossible to know what distinguishes us from any other related fields of study. A really clear image ought perhaps to have a nice frame around it; or are we part of a triptych, perhaps? Fourth, if we could work with any information we wanted for describing our colleagues,and not just what appears in the proposal, what would we want to know? Number of years in the profession? Number of years in schools? Degree area? Biggest problem in education, in 25 words or less? In short, what seems to matter most in guiding curriculum thought?

The questions could go on and on. I'll stop here, and will soon retreat back into my particular glen in the forest. The broad view is refreshing but it's hard to know quite what to do with it; perhaps just knowing, and appreciating, is enough for now.

References

Scheuneman, Janice Participation of men and women in AERA: 1970 to 1978. Educational Researcher 8:5, May 1979, pp. 10-12

Schwab, Joseph The practical: a language for curriculum. School Review 78, November 1969, pp. 1-23

Appendix A
23

1981 PROGRAM SUMMARY
AERA Division B ("Curriculum and Objectives")

Symposia

Qualities of Literacy (Vice-Presidential Symposium)
Philosophy of Education: Reactions to the 80th NSSE Yearbook[1]
Sources of Curriculum Policy and Practice: Federal Perspectives
What in the World is Curriculum Theory?[1]
The Contributions and Limitations of the Social and Behavioral Sciences to the Education of Educators
Inside an Evaluation Project
The Effects of Educational Models on Curriculum and Classroom Practice: Passing Fancies or Real Contributions?
Ethics, Ideology, and Curriculum Decision-Making[1]
A Future for Colleges of Education?
Ethnography and the Study of Curriculum
Curriculum Change and Stability: Perspectives from Four Disciplines
Can Written Curriculum Guides Guide Teaching?
A Second-Generation Critique of Alternative Research Methodologies
Objectives for Teacher Education: The Development of Teachers as Teachers and as Persons[2]
Instructional Improvement in Science Education at the Postsecondary Level[3]
Discussion as a Curricular Resource
Educational Criticism: Four Aspects of an Alternative Evaluation Methodology
Employability and Experiential Learning: Implications for Change in the Academic Curriculum
Curriculum Development to Promote Sex Equality: Needs, Materials, Evaluation[4]
For Every School a Community: Expanding Environments for Learning
Promising Directions in Curriculum Knowledge: Focus on Students[1]
The Natural Underlying Structures of the Disciplines II
Teacher Burnout: Disease and Cure
Learning from Curriculum Criticism: Exploring the Possibilities
Using Case Studies to Illuminate Kindergarten Curriculum
Science for the 80s: New Target Populations

Roundtable group sessions

The Teacher's Role in Curriculum Practice -- 4 papers
Models of Curriculum Change -- 6 papers
Studies of Elementary Curriculum Practice -- 4 papers
Curriculum in Secondary Schools -- 3 papers
Postsecondary Curriculum Issues -- 5 papers
Challenges to Traditional Curriculum Research -- 4 papers

Paper or critique sessions

Curriculum Content and the Ecology of the Classroom[5] -- 5 papers
Studies in Curriculum Change -- 6 papers
The Roles of Theory and Practice in Curriculum Inquiry -- 5 papers
Social and Political Constraints on the Curriculum -- 6 papers
Curriculum at the Postsecondary Level -- 5 papers
Studies in Reading[6] -- 6 papers
Curriculum Study as a Discipline -- 5 papers

Invited Address: "Education at the Turn of the Century: A Crucible for Curriculum Change" (Herbert Kliebard)

Business meeting and awards presentation: "Awards for Excellence in Curriculum Study"

SIG co-sponsors: [1]Creation & Utilization of Curriculum Knowledge; [2]Teacher Preparation Curriculum; [3]Postsecondary Education; [4]Research on Women in Education; [5]Research in Mathematics Education; [6]Basic Research in Reading

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